



# LEWIS & CLARK CITY-COUNTY Health Department

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## Flu Shots Available from Local Health Department

Flu shots are now available at the Lewis and Clark City-County Health Department, including at specially scheduled immunization clinics in Helena and outlying communities.

This year's flu vaccine has been designed to boost immunity to four strains of flu, rather than the usual three, according to Karen Wandel, public health nurse supervisor with the health department.

"So people who get a flu shot this year will get even better protection than in the past," she said.

The health department also offers a nasal spray vaccine, as well as a high-dose flu vaccine recommended for people age 65 and older. The department can bill all insurance providers, so participants should bring insurance information with them. Short or loose sleeves make immunization easier.

"We hope people will be a champ and get vaccinated against flu," Wandel said. "It's not only a way to protect their own health, but a way to protect the community as a whole, especially our more vulnerable residents, like babies and the elderly. It's the neighborly thing to do."

Flu shots are available at the health department's regular walk-in immunization clinics Mondays, Wednesdays, and Fridays from 11 a.m. to 4:30 p.m., 1930 Ninth Avenue. No appointment is needed; shots are provided on a first-come, first-served basis.

Additional flu shot clinics are scheduled as follows:

### Lincoln

- Thursday, Oct. 2, 11 a.m. to 2 p.m., Lincoln Community Center

### Helena

- Tuesday, Oct. 14, 9 to 10:30 a.m., Neighborhood Center, 200 S. Cruse Ave.

### Wolf Creek

- Thursday, Oct. 23, 3 to 4:30 p.m., Wolf Creek Elementary School

### Augusta

- Thursday, Nov. 6, 10 a.m. to 1 p.m., Augusta Community Hall and Senior Center

The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention recommend a yearly flu shot for everyone aged 6 months or older to protect against the flu.

Vaccination is especially important for people who are at a high risk of developing severe complications from flu. These include young children; pregnant women; people with chronic health conditions like asthma, diabetes, or heart and lung disease; and people 65 or older.

In the United States, flu season usually begins in October and can last until May. Health officials recommend getting vaccinated as soon as vaccine is available. It takes about two weeks after vaccination for the body to develop immunity.

For more information, contact the health department's flu hotline at 457-8904.